

Scenario Enabling Adaptability

SEA #5

“Children Bearing Gifts”

I. Case Study:

The moral level is dominant, over not only the physical but also the mental level. Mentally, many opponents know that they can not stand up to American technology, but the moral level compels them to fight anyway.

In SEA 5, we also see the power of weakness. In Asymmetric Warfare, the weak often have more power than the strong. One of the first people to employ the power of weakness was Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's insistence on non-violent tactics to defeat the British in India was and continues to be a classic strategy of Asymmetric Warfare. Once the British responded to Indian independence gatherings and rallies with violence, they immediately lost the moral war. Operation Iraq Freedom phases IV shows a strong military force, with almost no limits on the amount of violence it can apply to a situation, versus a very weak irregular force. The weaker force has the moral high ground because it is so weak. No one likes bullies using their physical superiority in order to win at anything, and unless we are extremely careful in how we apply our physical combat power, we soon come across as a bully.

Most important, we see the central role of de-escalation. In most Asymmetric Warfare situations, our best hope of winning lies not in escalation but in de-escalation. The "Hama model" (see student solutions) relies on escalation, but political factors will usually rule this approach out for Soldiers.

De-escalation is how police are trained to handle confrontations. From a policeman's perspective, escalation is almost always undesirable. If a police officer escalates a situation, he may find himself charged with a crime. This reflects society's desire for less, not more, violence.

II. Background and goals (Teacher refer to instructor handbook):

a. What do we want the student to understand?

- 1) **Impact of their decisions at all levels**
- 2) **High level stress and friction**
- 3) **Time Stress**
- 4) ***Coup d'oeil***
- 5) **Use of Rules of Engagement (Teacher-Introduce ROE in AAR)**

b. Adaptability?

1) Rapid Decision Making

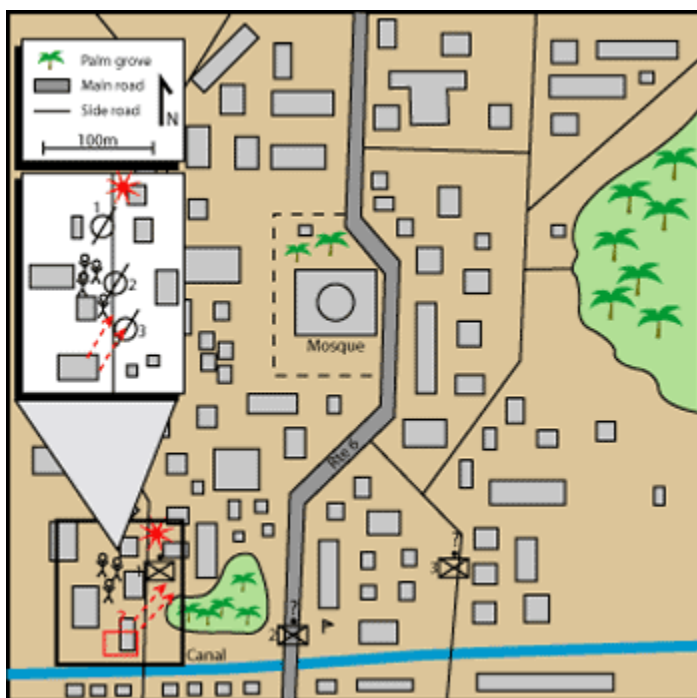
a) Pattern recognition

2) Recognition-primed decision (RPD) theory

III. Description:

a. What do we do?

You are the 1st Squad leader, 2d Platoon, Team A, Task Force Legion. Your Task Force has recently taken over the area of responsibility (AOR) from a U.S. Marine Corps battalion operating in east central Iraq, a country in which the dictatorial regime was terminated by U.S. and coalition forces. However, insurgent and mercenary fighters remain as active combatants.



Insert allows for classroom use

Your AOR is in an urban environment characterized by densely but haphazardly arranged mud brick houses of one and two stories with flat roofs, with the occasional taller building—usually a mosque or other religiously associated structure. The main roads are paved and two lanes wide. Side roads are also paved but only one and a half lanes wide. In addition, there are numerous narrow dirt alleyways only suitable for foot traffic.

The enemy you face wears no standardized military uniform and often appears in civilian dress, uses Soviet-era style infantry weapons (AK-47s, light machineguns, and rocket propelled grenades), and has the occasional command of 82mm mortars and 12.7mm machineguns. Their main tactic is the ambush, initiated by tripwire or command detonated

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improvised explosive device. The enemy rarely stands to fight, even after such ambushes. When they do it is often the signal of a major engagement. S-2 (intelligence) believes such battles center around religious sites.

The U.S. Marine Corps unit operating prior to your arrival had been relatively successful in matters of civilian affairs and civil-military relations. They had initiated a “weapons buy back program,” paying on a sliding scale in U.S. dollars for each weapon turned in depending upon its lethality. Despite such gains, the AOR still had a share of insurgent attacks.

Currently, your platoon is on its second patrol. You are moving from south to north, your squad on the left flank, 2d Squad in the center with the command element, and 3d Squad on the right. You have only your organic weapons, are in radio contact with the other squads, and command element, though such contact is not always 100 percent due to the urban environment.

The 2-hour patrol is broken by the sound of yelling and screaming kids coming at you from your left through an alley. You turn to see four young boys, 8 to 10 years old, each with different types of ammunition. One boy has a belt of 12.7mm around his neck; two boys hold 82mm mortar rounds like dead fish, from their fin-tails (you note one is fused); and to your horror, the fourth clasps a grenade, spoon in place, like a dead frog, but from your angle you cannot see signs of the pin.

At this instant there is the sound of an explosion, and a large dust cloud forms to your front. “Sergeant,” yells your Team Alpha leader, “Watson is down hard. Perez is hit too, but maybe not as bad.” One kid drops his mortar round and flees, followed by the kid with the 12.7mm. Then, AK-47 fire erupts from a nearby building behind you.

b. Requirement:

What now, Student?

In a time limit of 45 seconds, determine what actions you would take, what orders you would issue, and what reports, if any, you would make.

c. Instructor Notes:

- 1) You can have the children portray suicide bombers or right after the two flee the other two surrender (depending on what the Student decides).
- 2) In reality, the scenario was taken from one similar to Somalia, where children were drafted to be instant bombers, many fled at first opportunity.
- 3) Two kids did not flee. One with the grenade caused the explosion, and the one with the remaining artillery round is too scared to set it off.
- 4) The AK 47 shooter from behind the building is a lone gunman.
- 5) It is important to delineate between massed suppressive fire and selective well-aimed shots by the squad.

IV. Tools & Tasks:

a. Tools:

- 1) Recommended use through Seminar Discussion or a Tactical Decision Game
- 2) SEA 5 can be delivered using any tool, but use in a Force on Force, Free Play situation on its own may be too costly to achieve the desired result. Interject it as part of a larger SEA using Force on Force, Free Play. For example, your student squad has just accomplished a combat focused SEA, seized a building or bunker, and is consolidating. You feel that they have evolved enough to interject SEA 5.

b. Tasks: The Student may have to employ the following tasks in the execution of this SEA:

1)

IMPLEMENT THE ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS BOLC LN # 853

I	- Apply Leadership Fundamentals to Create a Climate that Fosters Ethical Behavior	158-100-1135
I	- Apply Ethical Decision Making Process as Commander, Leader, or Staff Member	158-100-1230
IV(unit)	- Comply with Department of Defense (DOD) Joint Ethics Regulatory (JER) Requirements	181-231-1001

2)

CONDUCT SMALL UNIT COMBAT OPERATIONS ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF WAR - BOLC LN #1027

181-431-1001

3)

INCORPORATE LESSONS LEARNED FROM MILITARY HISTORY INTO THE PROFESSION OF ARMS - #773

I	- Integrate Historical Awareness and Critical Thinking Skills Derived from Military History Methodologies into the Training and Education of Self and Subordinate Leaders	155-297-1010
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4)

PROCESS CAPTIVES - BOLC LN #1075

191-000-0001

5)

V COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY TO INFORM, PERSUADE OR DIRECT - BOLC LN #952

6)

I	PERFORM COMBATIVES - BOLC LN #317	071-7171 / B
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7)

I	CONDUCT SMALL UNIT COMBAT OPERATIONS ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF WAR - BOLC LN #1027	181-431-1001
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8)

IMPLEMENT THE ETHICAL DECISION MAKING PROCESS BOLC LN # 853

I	- Apply Leadership Fundamentals to Create a Climate that Fosters Ethical Behavior	158-100-1135
I	- Apply Ethical Decision Making Process as Commander, Leader, or Staff Member	158-100-1230

9)

I	PERFORM MOUTH TO MOUTH RESUSCITATION - BOLC LN #507 - Perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	081-831-10
I	PERFORM FIRST AID FOR BLEEDING OF AN EXTREMITY BOLC LN #489 - Control Bleeding and Treat Burns	071-D-231
I	PERFORM FIRST AID TO PREVENT OR CONTROL SHOCK BOLC LN #472 - Control Bleeding and Treat Burns	071-D-231

V. Facilitation hints:

a. The following techniques are recommended:

- 1) Choose the Student to present the solution
- 2) Enforce the “Time Limit” Rule hold the students to a set time limit. They must act quickly. Time compression creates stress, which is normally part of the decision-making process especially under operational conditions.

b. Possible questions:

- 1) What was your reasoning for that action?
- 2) What was your overall estimate of the situation?
- 3) What would you have done if...?
- 4) What were your assumptions?

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- 5) What was the biggest concern about your plan?
- 6) What is the Rules of Engagement say?
- 7) What are Rules of Engagement?

VI. Insights: What did we learn?

a. Adaptability: In solving SEA 5, there are two board solution outcomes.

b. Possible Student Solutions:

1) Key Students Issues that must at least touch upon:

- a. How does the Student handle his casualties?
- b.

2) The first may broadly be called the "de-escalation approach"

- a. **Student Solution 1:** The Student that selects this course of action would open fire on the AK Fire from the building (the real threat), and order his other fire team to wound the remaining two children. Since you don't know if they intend to be suicide bombers or were forced into service to carry ammunition, and are in fact scared, you must secure you unit while minimizing the damage your actions would have to the larger mission. Once the area is secured, you treat your casualties.
- b. **Student Solution 2:** The Student leader chooses not to engage the children that fled, but orders one fire team to disarm the remaining two children using non-lethal methods (Combatives?). The other fire team engages the AK 47 to the other side.
- c. **Teacher Notes:** De-escalation is how police are trained to handle confrontations. From a policeman's perspective, escalation is almost always undesirable. If a police officer escalates a situation, he may find himself charged with a crime. This reflects society's desire for less, not more, violence. Most people in foreign societies share this desire. They will not welcome foreigners who increase the level of violence around them.

For the Soldiers in this situation, the policeman is a more appropriate model than the Soldier. Soldiers are taught that, if they are not achieving the result they want, they should escalate: call in more troops, more firepower, tanks, artillery, aviation, etc. In this respect Leaders that are adaptive may find their own training for war against

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other state armed forces works against them. Soldiers must realize that in Asymmetric war, escalation almost always works to the advantage of their opponents. We cannot stress this point too strongly. Leaders in this situation must develop a "de-escalation mindset," along with supporting tactics and techniques.

There may be situations where escalation on the tactical level is necessary to obtain de-escalation on the operational and strategic levels. In such situations, Soldiers may want to have a special unit, analogous to a police SWAT team that appears quickly, uses the necessary violence, and then quickly disappears. This helps the Soldiers local people normally interact with to maintain their image as helpful friends.

Proportionality is another requirement if Soldiers want to avoid being seen as bullies. Using tanks, airpower and artillery against lightly armed guerillas not only injures and kills innocent civilians and destroys civilian property, it also works powerfully at the moral level of war to increase sympathy for Soldiers' opponents. That, in turn, helps our Asymmetric war enemies gain local and international support, funding and recruits. In the long term, it is more likely to cost Soldier's lives rather than save them.

De-escalation and proportionality in turn require Soldiers to be able to empathize with the local people. If they regard the local population with contempt, this contempt will carry over into their actions. Empathy cannot simply be commanded; developing it must be part of Marines' training.

Both empathy and Force Protection are best served by integrating Soldiers with the local population. If Soldiers live in a fortified base, separate from the local people, it will inevitably create a hostile "us/them" attitude on the part both of locals and of Soldiers themselves. This isolates Soldiers from the local people, which works to the advantage of our opponents.

Empathy and integration permit effective "cultural intelligence," which is to say Soldiers become able to understand how the society around them works. In Asymmetric war, virtually all useful intelligence is human intelligence. Often, such HUMINT must both be gathered and acted on with "stealth" techniques, where Soldiers' actions remain invisible to the local population. As in Maneuver Warfare, the tactical level in Asymmetric conflicts is reconnaissance- driven, not intelligence-driven; the information Soldiers need will almost always come from below, not from higher headquarters.

An understanding of local, factional politics, including those within the camps of Soldiers' opponents, will be of central importance to the effectiveness of Army operations. Success is more likely through "leveraging" such factionalism than through a force-based "direct approach"

We must understand that, despite our vast tactical and technical superiority over most Asymmetric warfare opponents, at the strategic level we will almost always be the weaker party. The reason is simple: at some point we will go home, while our opponents will remain. In the battle for the support of the local population, that fact overwhelms all others. Every local citizen must ask himself, “What will my situation be when the Soldiers leave?” If we fracture the local society to the point where order is unlikely after we depart, anyone who has worked with us will then be in danger.

Operation Iraqi Freedom, Phase IV illustrates a final central point about Asymmetric war: our strategic objectives must be realistic. Seldom if ever will we be able to re-make other societies and cultures. If doing so is our strategic objective, we will probably be doomed to defeat before the first round is fired. Nor can we make ourselves loved by countries we invade; keeping them from hating us so much that they want to fight us will often be the best we can do. In insurgencies, "51% solutions" are acceptable.

Each of these points is a central characteristic of Asymmetric. If we fail to understand even one of them, and act so as to contradict it, we will set ourselves up for defeat. Remember, for any state military, Asymmetric wars are easy to lose and very challenging to win. This is true despite the state military's great superiority over its Asymmetric opponents at the physical level of war. Indeed, to a significant degree, it is true because of that superiority. In most Asymmetric wars involving insurgencies, state armed forces end up defeating themselves.

3) The second solution is referred to as the "Hama model."

- a. **Student Solution 3:** The Student leaders does an action right squad on line battle drill against the kids and engages and kills them because he assumes correctly that the explosion came from the lone grenade one child had. In the heat of the moment, he disregards the two fleeing children, and his squad engages all four, killing them. He then follows through and turns around to assault the building where the AK 47 fire is coming from.

Instructor note: Does the student discriminate and order his squad to only engage the child who threw the grenade and the one with the last artillery round?

- b. Teacher Notes:** The Hama model refers to what Syrian President Hafez al-Assad did to the city of Hama in Syria when a non-state entity there, the Moslem Brotherhood, rebelled against his rule.

In 1982, in Hama, Syria, the Sunni Moslem Brotherhood was gaining strength and was planning on intervening in Syrian politics through violence. The dictator of Syria, Hafez El-Assad, was alerted by his intelligence sources that the Moslem Brotherhood was looking to assassinate various members of the ruling Baath Party. In fact, there is credible evidence that the Moslem Brotherhood was planning on overthrowing the Shiite/Allawite-dominated Baath.

On February 2, 1982, the Syrian Army was deployed into the area surrounding Hama. Within three weeks, the Syrian Army had completely devastated the city of Hama, resulting in the deaths of between 10,000 and 25,000 people, depending on the source. The use of heavy artillery, armored forces and possibly poison gas resulted in large-scale destruction and an end to the Moslem Brotherhood's desires to overthrow the Baath Party and Hafez El-Assad. After the operation was finished, one surviving citizen of Hama stated, “We don't do politics here anymore, we just do religion.”

The results of the destruction of Hama were clear to the survivors. As the June 20, 2000 Christian Science Monitor wrote, “Syria has been vilified in the West for the atrocities at Hama. But many Syrians – including a Sunni merchant class that has thrived under Alawite rule – also note that the result has been years of stability.”

What distinguishes the Hama model is overwhelming firepower and force, deliberately used to create massive casualties and destruction, in an action that is over fast. Speed is of the essence to the Hama model. If a Hama-type operation is allowed to drag out, it will turn into a disaster on the moral level. The objective is to get it over with so fast that the effect desired locally is achieved before anyone else has time to react or, ideally, even to notice what is going on.

The teacher should devote little attention to the Hama model because situations where Soldiers will be allowed to employ it will probably be few. Domestic and international political considerations will normally rule it out. It might become an option if a Weapon of Mass Destruction were used against us on our own soil.

The main reason we need to identify the Hama model is to note a serious danger facing state armed forces in Asymmetric warfare insurgency situations. It is easy, but fatal, to choose a course that lies between the Hama model and the de-escalation model. Such a course inevitably results in defeat, because of the power of weakness.

Historian Martin van Creveld compares a state military that, with its vast superiority in lethality, continually turns its firepower on poorly-equipped insurgency opponents to an adult who administers a prolonged, violent beating to a child in a public place. Regardless of how bad the child has been, every observer sympathizes with the child. Soon, outsiders intervene, and the adult is arrested. The mismatch is so great that the adult's action is judged a crime.¹

This is what happens to state armed forces that attempt to split the difference between the Hama and de-escalation models.

The seemingly endless spectacle of weak opponents and, inevitably, local civilians being killed by the state military's overwhelming power defeats the state at the moral level. That is why the rule for the Hama model is that the violence must be over fast.

Any attempt at a compromise between the two models results in prolonged violence by the state's armed forces, and it is the duration of the mismatch that is fatal. To the degree the state armed forces are also foreign invaders, the state's defeat occurs all the sooner. It occurs both locally and on a world scale. In the 3,000 years that the story of David and Goliath has been told, how many listeners have identified with Goliath?

Generally, the only promising option for Soldiers will be the de-escalation model. What this means is that when situations threaten to turn violent or actually do so, Soldiers in Asymmetric warfare situations will usually focus their efforts on lowering the level of confrontation until it is no longer violent. They will do so on the tactical, operational and strategic levels.

c. Next steps and recommendations:

- i. Apply a similar scenario to a platoon level exercise, with the children running from a crowd.
- ii. This is a challenging SEA, should choose either a student that has already shown traits of being to aggressive, chooses firepower solutions, or a student that is adapting faster than his or her peers.

¹ Conversation between Martin van Creveld and William S. Lind, May 2004, Bergen, Norway.

VII. Resource Considerations:

- a. Free Play Force on Force**
- b. TDG**
- c. Seminar:**

- 1) Class room, any space that can hold a student squad**

VIII. Task Support Packages: